

Donated pilot plant directs student learning toward entrepreneurship

Beginning fall 2011, chemical engineering students will be educated in biodiesel production and design processes through the department's senior laboratory course, led by Antony Beris, the Arthur Metzner Professor of Chemical Engineering. The opportunity is the result of a generous gift from UD alumnus **JAMES SEFERIS, PH.D. '77**, who donated a biodiesel processor to the department last spring.



House in Colburn Laboratory, the biodiesel processor (worth an estimated \$50k) is capable of recycling 130-150 gallons of cooking oil per batch to produce 100 gallons of biodiesel fuel, as well as glycerin, a syrupy by-product with many uses in agriculture, pharmaceuticals and beauty products.

Seferis calls himself a 'venture catalyst' – someone who influences a reaction without actually taking part in it. Through this donation, Seferis said he hopes to "catalyze a spirit of entrepreneurship, teaching and leadership" that will inspire UD chemical engineering students to create new innovations. He said the effort may also eventually seed start-up companies focused on sustainability issues.

"What is really interesting about UD is the integrative thinking and systemic approach to energy," said Seferis. "The beauty of this project is the opportunity to recycle not just oil, but also ideas that may now gain a foothold because of new technology, giving hope to the next generation," said Seferis.

He continued on, "Most commercial innovations are actually re-innovations. I'm investing in the University to engage the community with science, because the future in engineering is people."

Seferis is a distinguished educator in chemical engineering, management science, environmental health and technology. In addition to his research on polymeric composites, materials and processes, including clean energy, Seferis is a sought after advisor, consultant and lecturer in aviation, chemical and energy sectors.

He earned his doctoral degree in chemical engineering at UD in 1977. Following a distinguished thirty-year academic career at University of Washington in Seattle, with additional appointments at universities in Greece, Germany and Korea, Seferis founded GloCal Network Corporation (USA) in 2005 and currently serves as the firm's chairman, president and CEO.

Senior Design Award honors former faculty member, David G.R. Short



DR. DAVID SHORT provided dedicated and excellent teaching in the chemical engineering department for more than ten years, and in the course of aiding us with our undergraduate teaching mission,

developed substantive and innovative curricula and teaching materials as well as provided guidance and mentoring to hundreds of chemical engineering students. In recognition of his extraordinary service the Department of Chemical Engineering establishes the David G.R. Short Senior Design Award. This honor, which includes a certificate of achievement and a cash award, is given to the senior design team in CHEG 432 Chemical Process Analysis that best exemplifies the traits that David so valued—namely a quality engineering design incorporating significant effort and personal initiative. The winning team will be determined by the instructors in CHEG 432 and awarded annually at the senior banquet.